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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. Official Bulgarian statistics on present coal production seem to be only slightly exaggerated. Production in 1952 was 7,000,000 tons, as compared with 2,000,000 to 3,000,000 tons in 1939. However, the desired increase of 18 percent during the current year cannot possibly be reached because of the failure to fulfill the plan of the first half of the year. The mines of the Maritsa Basin have obtained only fractional results, as follows:
 - a. Novi Rudnitsi, 67 percent in January 1953 and 30 percent in February 1953; and
 - b. Marbas Mine, 91 percent, 90 percent, and 89 percent in February, March, and April 1953 respectively.
2. During the summer, coal mining was speeded up so that plan targets were met, but to date fulfillment has been possible only through deterioration of quality. Thus the calory value of the brown coal has sunk to 4,600 calories as compared with 5,400 calories in 1939. In 1939 over 90 percent brown coal was produced and only about four percent limit coal; today, scarcely 65 percent of brown coal is produced and about 27 percent of limit coal which produces a heating value of only 2,500 calories. The relatively unimportant production of anthracite rose from 6,000 tons in 1939 to about 42,000 tons in 1952. Stone coal production has risen from 150,000 tons prior to World War II to the present figure of 300,000 tons per year.
3. The decrease in quality of Bulgarian brown coal has brought about the cancellation of an export order to the Soviet Union this year. At the end of July 1953, a Soviet commission made an unscheduled inspection of two trains loaded for export and took over only five cars. Since then the entire export quota of coal is checked in Bulgaria before being forwarded. The Stalin Plant at Pernik has also refused to take any Bulgarian brown coal during the last few months.
4. Soviet efforts to increase Bulgarian coal production are concentrated on the Marbas Mines of the Maritsa Basin and on the Pernik Basin Mines. It is only from these mines that coal is exported to the USSR.

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